



4TH INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON
**Small Island
Developing States**
27-30 MAY, 2024
ST. JOHN'S, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

SIDS4 Conference Side Event

Enabling Inclusion: Addressing Disability Challenges

May 30, 8:00-9:30, Room 9

**Organized by: Circle of Friends Inc, Antigua and Barbuda
Association of Persons with Disabilities, Advocacy Grenada
Inc, St.Kitts & Nevis Association of Persons with Disabilities,
Trinidad & Tobago Disabled People International Chapter,
St.Vincent and Grenadines Society of the Blind LEAD
Center for PAJS**

Two-page maximum

Background on the event (one paragraph)

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The event, themed "Enabling Inclusion: Addressing Disability Challenges," spotlighted the unique obstacles faced by individuals with disabilities in Small Island Developing States (SIDS), encompassing barriers in education, healthcare, employment, and social integration. Organized by Circle of Friends Inc, in partnership with several regional disability organizations, it highlighted successful initiatives and best practices from SIDS and beyond that have effectively addressed disability-related issues, championing the rights and empowerment of people with disabilities. The panel discussion focused on innovative strategies to enhance accessibility, inclusivity, and support systems, including leveraging technology, advocating for policy reforms, and fostering community involvement. Emphasizing the integration of disability-inclusive policies into broader development agendas, the event aimed to promote sustainable development, resilience, and social cohesion while exploring opportunities for collaboration among governments, civil society, international agencies, and other stakeholders.

Key Issues discussed

- Shaping Minds: Empowering Disability Representation in the Popular Press
- Navigating the Waves: The Antigua and Barbuda Association of Persons with Disabilities - A Tale of Advocacy, Resilience, and Legislative Triumphs:
- Exploring KOBO Data Collection & Horticultural Therapy: Insights from Antigua & Barbuda":
- Fostering Inclusive Education in Small Island Developing States (SIDs).
- "Empowering the Visually Impaired: Leveraging Potential in SIDS Communities",
- Advancing Inclusivity: Progress in Accessibility Building Codes in SIDS":
- CBR /CBID catalysts community inclusion for PWD and national development - Social Model of Disability in SIDs
- "To Include or Not Include": A Holistic Approach to Transformative Public Policy and Sociocultural Change

Key recommendations for action

We urge global governments and allies to prioritize a person-first approach, ensuring people with disabilities fully participate in development, implementation, and sustainability efforts. The following actions will promote 21st-century practices, interdisciplinary collaboration, and partnerships, guaranteeing their engagement at decision-making tables to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal of "Leaving NO ONE behind

- Enact and enforce legislation and policies to promote the rights and inclusivity of individuals with disabilities.
- Increase funding for CSOs to support training, skill development, leadership training, and empowerment workshops for people with disabilities.
- Strengthen partnerships between disability-focused organizations, government agencies, NGOs, businesses, and other stakeholders.
- Promote accessible infrastructure and services following universal design principles.
- Enhance disability rights and abilities through education campaigns, media representation, and fostering inclusivity and acceptance.
- Utilize the WHO CBR-CBID Guidelines and Matrix as a catalyst for sustainable development of DPOs and their programming.
- Adopt the Bottom Up approach from the ALMA ATA Health for ALL by 2000 initiative and the UNCRPD for development and implementation.
- Establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating progress toward inclusive development goals, ensuring ongoing dialogue and stakeholder engagement.

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